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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/596,873	06/28/2006	Yuji Hiroshige	59584US004	1755
32692 7590 09/05/2007 3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY PO BOX 33427 ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427			EXAMINER REDDY, KARUNA P	
			ART UNIT 1713	PAPER NUMBER
			NOTIFICATION DATE 09/05/2007	DELIVERY MODE ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/596,873	Applicant(s) HIROSHIGE ET AL.	
	Examiner Karuna P. Reddy	Art Unit 1713	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 7 and 8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/11/2006, 7/20/2007</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Preliminary amendment filed on June 28, 2006 is made of record. Claims 1-8 are currently pending in the application.

Election/Restrictions

1. This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.
2. The species are as follows:

Organophosphorus compound, triazine skeleton-containing compound, an expanded graphite and polyphenylene ether.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by

37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

3. The claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed above in the following manner:

Claims 3 and 7 (organophosphorus compound); Claim 4 (triazine skeleton-containing compound); Claim 5 (expanded graphite); Claim 6 (polyphenylene ether).

The following claim(s) are generic: Claims 1, 2 and 8. Therefore,

Group I - claims 1-3 and 7-8 (organophosphorus compound).

Group II - claims 1-2, 4 and 8 (triazine skeleton-containing compound).

Group III - claims 1-2, 5 and 8 (expanded graphite).

Group IV - claims 1-2, 6 and 8 (polyphenylene ether).

4. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the species neither have a common structural feature associated with them or belong to the same class of compounds.
5. During a telephone conversation with Scott Bardell on August 27, 2007 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-3 and 7-8. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in

replying to this Office action. Claims 4-6 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:
1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
 4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
9. Claims 1-3 and 7-8 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Yamazaki et al (JP 2000-313785).

Yamazaki et al disclose a resin composition for fire-resistant molding materials suitably used as a sheet (paragraph 0001). The flame retardant molding material comprises a radically polymerizable resin containing aluminum hydroxide and phosphoric ester methacrylate (paragraph 0007). Other compounds that are copolymerizable with phosphoric ester methacrylate can be included (paragraph 0023). Examples of copolymerizable monomers include styrene, methyl (meth)acrylate, ethyl (meth)acrylate (paragraph 0025). The phosphoric ester (meth)acrylate is present in 5-80% by weight of the resin and it is desirable that the other copolymerizable monomer is present in an amount of 20-95% by weight. It is desirable to use 100-300 parts by weight of aluminum hydroxide to 100 parts of the resin (paragraph 0028) and reads on the wt% of metal hydroxide of claim 1. See example 1-3 (Table 1) wherein the percentage of aluminum hydroxide falls within the claimed range.

The prior is silent with respect to its use as a thermally conductive sheet and the high flame retardancy associated with it.

However, in light of the fact that prior art teaches / discloses essentially the same composition as that of the claimed and is useful for molding into a flame retardant sheet, one of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable basis to believe that the flame retardant sheet formed using the composition of prior art exhibits essentially the same property(ies) i.e. high flame retardancy which is thermally conducting. Therefore, the flame retardant sheet of prior art can be used as a thermally conductive sheet and possess high flame retardancy. See *In re Best*, 562 F.2d 1252, 1254, 195 USPQ 430, 433 (CCPA 1977).

Even if properties of the flame retardant sheet of instant claims and prior art examples are not the same, it would still have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to make flame retardant sheet having the claimed properties because it appears that the references generically embrace the claimed flame retardant sheet and the person of ordinary skill in the art would have expected all embodiments of the reference to work. Applicants have not demonstrated that the differences, if any, between the claimed flame retardant sheet and the flame retardant sheet of prior art give rise to unexpected results.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karuna P. Reddy whose telephone number is (571) 272-6566.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Karuna P Reddy
Examiner
Art Unit 1713

/KR/


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